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E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/18/2018  
TAGS: FUN PHUM PERL KDEM  
SUBJECT: NORWAY WON'T SUPPORT PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE EVENT  
AT UN NYC

REF: A. OSLO 388  
B. STATE 70829

Classified By: Political Counselor Kristen Bauer for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Poloff was called by Anne Merchant, Senior Advisor in the MFA Section for Human Rights and Democracy, and told that Norway would not co-sponsor the NYC prisoners of conscience event. Merchant had consulted extensively with State Secretary Elizabeth Walaas and the issue had been debated internally.

¶2. (C) As justification, Merchant said that it was perceived as too politically controversial to pick specific countries to be represented at the event, and it would have been better to have an event with the special rapporteurs. Merchant suggested the USG should have discussed the issue with potential supporters other than the EU earlier on.

¶3. (C) Speaking more informally, Merchant said that Cuba and, to a lesser extent, Eritrea were the issues. Norway said it had received support from Cuba on recent resolutions. Supporting the event might jeopardize its relations with both Cuba and Eritrea.

WHITNEY